



Helping New Mexico small businesses earns recognition for Los Alamos National Lab employees

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Program provides access to technical expertise and laboratory capabilities

LOS ALAMOS, N.M., Nov. 10, 2015—Two Los Alamos National Laboratory employees were recently recognized in an awards ceremony for providing their technical expertise and access to lab capabilities to help small businesses through the New Mexico Small Business Assistance Program.

Don Quintana, a group leader within Los Alamos' Applied Engineering Technology Division, was recognized for his work leading a team that helped a Santa Fe company validate the performance of their technology designed to protect solar collectors from damage. Also recognized was Pulak Nath of Los Alamos' Applied Modern Physics group for his work on leveraged projects, which allow multiple small businesses that share technical challenges to request assistance collectively for a larger project. Nath's team assisted a group of companies to explore techniques to enhance the production of algae.

"Don [Quintana] and his team have done some amazing work for the company, resulting in a very satisfied customer," said Becky Coel-Roback of Los Alamos' NMSBA program in remarks at the ceremony. She added that Nath's patience and clear communication style made him an exceptional leader. "Working with multiple companies is always a big challenge," said Coel-Roback, "and Pulak went above and beyond to help them all."

Both Quintana and Nath received Principal Investigator Excellence (PIE) awards, which were commemorated with, of course, fresh pies.

The NMSBA Program was created in 2000 by the State Legislature to bring national laboratory technology and expertise to small businesses in New Mexico, promoting economic development with an emphasis on rural areas. Originally begun at Sandia National Laboratories, Los Alamos joined the program in 2007.

At no cost to them, small businesses with technical challenges can seek assistance from laboratory scientists or engineers for projects that require testing, design consultation, or access to special equipment or facilities. Assistance takes the form of Lab staff hours valued at up to \$20,000 per calendar year for businesses located in rural New Mexico counties, and \$10,000 for businesses located in Bernalillo County. The

total amount of assistance is capped at \$2.4 million annually apiece for Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories.

Last year, Los Alamos National Lab assisted more than 160 small businesses through the program. “This program has a big impact on the community,” said Duncan McBranch, chief technology officer for Los Alamos National Laboratory, addressing Los Alamos Principal Investigators at the ceremony held on October 29 at the Los Alamos Research Park. “When I meet with state representatives and others in the community, I hear over and over again how important this program is. The hard work of our staff is helping New Mexico small businesses to thrive.”

The breakfast reception was sponsored by Los Alamos Connect, Los Alamos National Security, LLC, and the NMSBA Program.

Laboratory scientists and engineers interested in collaborating with small businesses through the NMSBA Program should contact [Becky Coel-Roback](#) or [Kim Sherwood](#) at the Richard P. Feynman Center for Innovation.

More information about the New Mexico Small Business Assistance Program is available at <http://www.nmsbaprogram.org/>.

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